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A REVIEW,

BY A LAYMAN,

OF A WORK ENTITLED,

“NEW THEMES FOR THE PROTESTANT CLERGY:

CREEDS WITHOUT CHARITY,

THEOLOGY WITHOUT HUMANITY,

AND

PROTESTANTISM WITHOUT CHRISTIANITY.”

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“ New opinions, divers and dangerous; which are heresies,  
And, not reform'd, may prove pernicious.”

HENRY VIII., *Act 5, Scene 2.*  
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PHILADELPHIA:  
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1852.



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# A R E V I E W

OF

“NEW THEMES FOR THE PROTESTANT  
CLERGY,” ETC.

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AMIDST the multiplicity of works now issuing from the press, calculated merely to gratify the imagination, or please the taste, it is encouraging to find, occasionally, some book which urges upon our notice the *duties* of humanity. We would not banish the former from our table and libraries, but neither should they make us unmindful of the grave responsibilities of life. Entertaining these sentiments, we are always prepared to judge favourably of any book intended to stir men up to active usefulness, and philanthropic effort. If, therefore, the “New Themes for the Protestant Clergy” have failed to gain our approval, it is cer-



tainly not because we have perused it in a captious and fault finding spirit. Indeed, we have been informed of the topics of the work, not by its caption, but, in spite of its title: for we naturally supposed that such a belligerent title page as "New Themes for the Protestant Clergy, creeds without charity, theology without humanity, and protestantism without christianity," could emanate only from a Roman Catholic, who was prepared to contrast the excellencies of his own church, with this deplorable state of affairs alleged to exist in the camp of the enemy. This, we say, is a natural inference from the title; and as a proof that it is, we know it was asserted that, the author of this work had become a Roman Catholic, and written against his former religious associates.

If the title do not mean that the "*Protestant* Clergy are thus guilty, as distinguished from the Roman Catholic Clergy, then it means nothing, and is a gratuitous



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insult to the "Protestant Clergy." Not only so, but it is manifestly unjust to brand one class of men by name, and then prove that they are no worse than those from whom this name distinguishes them. The professed object of the work would appear to be, to charge the responsibility of pauperism, upon all who are not paupers. To the pauper himself, no blame seems to be attached: the guilt of his crimes, and the disgrace of his rags, are thrown upon his religious, and well dressed, neighbour. No matter *how* he became a pauper:—he may have drank away his money, or thrown away his money, or have forfeited his character by crime, so that employers will not trust him:—yet, forsooth, the reckoning for all this lies at the door of every good citizen in the community. Perhaps, as is the case in thousands of instances, he refuses to work. Now we know what the apostle's rule is in such cases. If any man will not work neither shall he eat. 2 Thess. 3—10.



But our author's charity seems to be of a more enlarged kind. A pauper seems to him an object of interest, because he is a pauper. What he would have us to do, under the melancholy state of things that he depicts, we have in vain endeavored to ascertain from his pages. The dark complexion of the title page, colours the whole book. Protestants, and Roman Catholics, Clergy, and Laymen, men, and women, all share alike. All are rated soundly, for not doing something which the author would set them at, though he hardly seems to know what it is, himself. If there be any thing he recommends, we should suppose it was to fill the pockets with money, and rush from house to house, among the poorer classes, distributing broad-cast, just as people wished for it. What would be the result of such a day's labour;—where the money would be found (in many cases) before the next morning;—we will not stop to inquire.

The author of "New Themes," professes



to believe in Christianity as a divine revelation, and we do not doubt his sincerity; yet we can truly say that, an extensive perusal of infidel writings, has failed to present to our notice any work so abusive of Christians, and Christian Literature, as is this production of an avowed believer, at least in the truths of the Bible. Wholesale denunciation of those who bear the name of Christ, is the great staple of the whole work. In a literary point of view, we might object to the tautology which presents us with the same set of charges, repeated, page after page, in almost exactly the same words; so that the 297 pages might be curtailed 100, without much detracting from the essence of the book. But it is the spirit and tendency of these pages, which excite our sorrow that, an avowed friend of religion, should thus hold it up as an object of scorn and contempt to an unbelieving world. Not that we would wish the *truth* to be suppressed, but if these pages bear the



stamp of truth, we have greatly erred in our judgment of them.

We propose a brief review of "New Themes for the Protestant Clergy," and shall endeavour to consider its merits in a spirit of candour, and certainly without prejudice against either the book, or its unknown author. As we have already intimated, the distinguishing feature of the work is unsparing abuse. Although the "*Protestant Clergy*" are gibbeted on the title page, yet with what injustice, as *Protestants*, will appear from our author's sentiments concerning Romanists. According to his views, Romanism is a failure, Protestantism is a failure, and, of course, Christianity is a failure. Let us first give samples of our author's opinion of Romish charities. "Papal Rome did not cease to inculcate charity, and extol it as the highest of Christian virtues; but this she did, not that she cared for the poor, but because 'she was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put



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therein.' John 12—6. Like Judas, whose apparent zeal for the poor exceeded that of the other disciples, his zeal to fill his bag having increased with the avarice which the bearing of that bag had engendered, the papacy preached charity with increasing earnestness when avarice had become the motive. The experience of the Roman church proved that, where there is a bag of money to be held, or large sums to be administered, a Judas will creep into the office.

\* \* \* Religious houses and charitable institutions became the scenes of frightful abuse and perversion. No wickedness of this world has much exceeded that which these abuses have exhibited." (p. 82, 83).

If Rome thus proved derelict, why are the *Protestant* Clergy, alone, to be impaled on our author's amiable title page? This is tolerably severe on our Romish brethren, but if they think to get off with this, they are much mistaken. How do they like this picture?



“When Rome had assumed the government of all Christendom, and had put forth every device which cunning and wickedness could contrive to increase her power, and to extract money from her votaries, she preached charity unceasingly, as the great feature and characteristic of the Christian religion. \* \* Whilst the main object was to become the administrators of charity, and to absorb the alms of the faithful, it happily fell out that all the givers did not select the Church as the medium of their bounty, and that many actually practised that charity which was chiefly enforced from interested motives.” (p. 84). Again : “The corruptions and abuses of the Romish Church assumed in this period a form in which the priesthood, in all its grades, must naturally become ambitious, corrupt, and tyrannical; the mass of the people ignorant, superstitious, and enslaved.” (p. 86). As Protestant modes of providing for the poor, are so much reprehended, we



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would, of course, infer that, our author greatly prefers the system of ancient Rome. We are, therefore, surprised at the dark picture which he draws in the above, and the following, sketch. "During this corrupt period the charitable institutions, which had multiplied without number in the primitive ages of Christianity, under an infinity of names and organizations, were to a great extent, perverted from their true design and the objects of the founders. Monasteries, hospitals, religious houses of every name became nests of lazy drones, consuming and wasting the bounty of the charitable—the patrimony of the poor. Many associations, which had their origin in a plan of joint labour for the poor, became sinks, swallowing the benefactions attached to their institutions by the purity and industry of the early associates. \* \* Not only were these ancient establishments thus perverted and abused, but innumerable others were founded, and in like manner abused.



The mass of these perversions and corruptions, became so great finally, as to draw the attention of all who had minds even partially free from the bondage of the church. They became an offence to all such in Christendom." (p. 87, 88). "The long abuse of charity and its institutions had made them a stench in the nostrils of those who had become awakened to papal usurpation." (p. 90).

The modern Roman church does not seem to please our censor any better than that of former days, for we are told, at p. 183: "But the world now looks on and beholds, in Catholic countries, that great machine called the Church, contrived by crafty and ambitious men to enrich themselves, under cover of ignorance and superstition &c." "Let not the Romanist flatter himself that the Church can ultimately vindicate Christianity, and set all right. \* \* His church is condemned already, and is clinging with unwise and depraved pertina-



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city to that power which the world will ere long tear from hands polluted with every crime." (p. 184, 185.) Now if this be a true picture of Rome, why should not these "New Themes" be commended to the *Roman* Clergy, as well as the Protestant Clergy? Surely, Romanism is a failure, if these be her works!

Now let us see what is the opinion of our critic, of those men "of whom the world was not worthy";—who willingly "endured the loss of all things," for the love they bore to Christ and His Gospel? What does he think of the reformers?

"The men of the Reformation were men of truth, not of charity" (p. 112.) "Their building was massy, of noble and severe outline: its frame work of truth was of impregnable strength, yet it was cold, forbidding, and uncomfortable; it was neither warmed nor lighted by charity. \* \* Look into the Theology of the Reformation and see if it be not subject to this reproach. It



is a *form* of Christianity with charity left out; \* \* It is a monstrous technicality; it is sculptured marble, white and beautiful, but rigid and unfeeling." (p. 111, 112.) And yet he proceeds to tell us, "This takes away none of the real merits of the Reformation." (p. 112.)

We have remarked that, our author seems to consider Christianity as a failure. In illustration of this portion of the "New Themes," we shall quote a series of the bitterest denunciations against Christians, we have ever yet encountered. Gibbon is more respectful, and Bolingbroke far more polite, when censuring Christians, than is our professed believer in Christ. The reader will be immediately reminded of the asperity of Voltaire, and the recklessness of Paine. Hear our author's opinion of his fellow Christians! The italics throughout this review, are our own. "Where are the Christians of whom it may be said, 'By this shall all men know that ye are my dis-



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ciples, if ye have love to one another,'—such love as Christ himself prescribes and characterizes? If no such exemplification, and *no approach to it can be found*, may we not fear that this is the barrier which now stays the progress of Christianity? \* \*

When the men of the heathen world look upon the Christian world, what do they behold? Christianity?—No! Civilization:—civilized men indebted to Christianity, but not repaying the obligation. They behold the evidences of science on every side, *but illustrations of the pure teachings of Christ they find nowhere.*" (p. 28; 29.)

Rather sweeping this! We defy the most diligent reader, to produce a severer denunciation, from the pages of any avowed infidel. And this is no hasty ebullition of passion, but the author's deliberate opinion. For hear him farther:

"Where is the Christianity which they [scripture texts] prescribe? Where are the



Christians who receive these instructions and obey them?" (p. 58.) "We have thousands upon thousands of volumes of religious books; but where is our Christianity? \* \* Where, we ask, are the results of this immense and costly paraphernalia of Christianity? Is there not reason to inquire if the essence of true religion has not been crushed, repelled, and sometimes wholly extinguished, under this load." (p. 60, 61.)

"The thirst for power, the rage to govern, infects more or less the mass and the individuals of *every religious denomination*." (p. 100, 101.)

"If Christianity is not exemplified in the lives of its professors in this country, where lies the responsibility?" (p. 174.)

"In point of fact, we find Christians forgetting their vocation in the exercise of their duty as citizens, and ranging themselves in the rank and file of political gamblers and demagogues." (p. 174, 175.)



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“Look, then, at those who profess to be his followers, and bear his name. Scores of churches surround us, mutually repelling and attacking each other, and affording a scene of *strife, jealousy, animosity, and evil speaking, with scarce a parallel for virulence in the proceedings of those who profess no fellowship with Christ.*” (p. 176).

Did any of our readers, in all their experience in theological controversy, ever meet with any thing quite so bitter as this charge? As to its truth, we need say nothing. It confutes itself. Is there any gall in infidel ink quite equal to the following. If so, we have yet to see it.

“But while this sectarianism is thus a spectacle to the world, it is eclipsed by the internal feuds to which these sects are themselves exposed. Many of them have been convulsed to their centres, or blown asunder by *explosions of strife and evil passions, which were a disgrace to civilization, let alone Christianity.* \* \* Apart from



these flagrant departures from the spirit of Christianity, what does the current history of the various churches, in greater or less degree disclose? Intense and often unscrupulous rivalry, incessant and unkind competition, a self-glorifying and haughty demeanour." (p. 177.)

No wonder that our censor considers Christianity a failure, if he believe the above and the following:

"Let modern Pharisees of every church, who imagine they have attained unto the full measure of holiness, pause to inquire whether they are not merely full of spiritual pride and uncharitableness: for sanctity cannot dwell but with brotherly love." (p. 182.) "A devotion to Mammon never before equalled, a grinding competition in all the pursuits of life, a race for wealth and power &c. \* \* a scene of strife, of endless divisions, of hot discussions about trifles, of sectarian rivalry, in which every element of evil mingles, often without even a spice of



human kindness, much less religious charity. Will the world adopt Christianity while this picture is before it? No: the world has already risen in judgment upon Christianity as exemplified by those who are called Christians." (p. 183, 184.) Why the author should profess to believe in the divine origin of a religion which has thus signally failed to fulfil its purpose, we leave him to explain. Advocates for Christianity, from Tertullian to Paley, have considered its beneficial effects upon individuals and nations, as one of its strongest proofs. But it seems they were altogether mistaken. Upon only one presumption do we find the "New Themes" intelligible and consistent. This presumption is that, it is offered to the world by an unbeliever, as a proof of the failure of Christianity. And if Christianity have failed, the inference is irresistible; it cannot be from God. It is folly to say that, Christianity has failed, because men were unworthy of it. "Known unto God



are all his works from the beginning;" and is it to be believed that, he has given Christianity to the world, at the expense of His Son's blood, and the sufferings of His martyrs, in all ages, with a full knowledge of its inadequacy to fulfil what he declares to be his purpose in the gift? Yet we do not believe the author of "New Themes" to be an infidel. He professes to believe in the Scriptures, and we credit his profession. But, certainly, we should never arrive at such a conclusion from his book. To show that we are not singular in this view, let us mention an incident, connected with the first publication of "New Themes." A bookseller, who had the book sent him for sale, glanced over its pages, and, being a conscientious man, saw enough to make him hesitate whether he ought to dispose of it. Not willing to rest entirely upon his own judgment, he sent the book to one of the most eminent men of the United States, whom he considered a suitable judge, with



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a request that he would give his opinion of the work. After inspection, a written opinion was returned to this effect:—"The book must be the production of an infidel, or a socialist. I advise you not to sell it." This fact we had from the lips of the gentleman who gave this opinion.

And how can any one think otherwise of the sentiments of a man who, in page after page, represents Christians as the enemies of humanity, and oppressors of their race? Who would not suppose the author of such statements as the following, to be an infidel?

"In chartism, in democracy, in socialism, there is not necessarily any ingredient of infidelity; and yet in fact, we find them to a large extent blended and travelling together, because *Christians as such*, and those who pretend to be such, have, without just discrimination, *opposed every movement of reform*, as dangerous to society." (p. 272, 273.) That this is a libel of the worst



kind, we need hardly say. Exactly the contrary is the fact. It is to Christians that the world is indebted for every reform worthy of the name. But why pause to argue with so reckless a denouncer as this? Does not this look like infidelity?

Now, after seeing what opinion our author entertains of Christians, in general, we would fain hope to find him in better humour with the leaders of the Christian army,—the clergy. But if we have any such expectation as this, we shall be sadly disappointed. Now we are bold in the assertion that, if there be an exemplary set of men upon earth, it is the protestant clergy of the present day. We appeal to any one who has taken an active interest in the amelioration of the condition of the poor, for the truth of this statement. In the lanes and alleys of our cities and suburbs, by the bedsides of the sick and dying, ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of the destitute, and the guilty, will



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be found the ministers of Christ. Poorly provided for themselves ;—often with hardly enough to keep soul and body together ;—yet even then will they be found parting with their garments to “clothe the naked,” and “dealing out their bread to the hungry.” Other men, however generally laborious, have their seasons of rest, and their hours of uninterrupted ease, in the bosoms of their families ;—but the minister of Christ is, constantly, the “servant of men ;” and in sickness, or in health, in strength, or in weariness, he is liable to be summoned, at a moment’s warning, to turn his back upon the comforts of home, and exercise the duties of a comforter and guide, when, perhaps, he sadly feels the need of consolation and guidance himself. This is the gratuitous testimony of one, himself a layman, who claims to be as good a judge of the matter as the author of the “New Themes” can be. That some clergymen are recreant to their high trust, proves



nothing against the general excellence of the character of their profession. Now what is our author's opinion of this noble, self-sacrificing, body of men? The reader shall see for himself:—

“Now, whether we look upon the whole mass of those who are regarded as Christ's ministers, or at those of any particular denomination, we shall be equally at a *loss to find any class of them who are imitating the ministry of their Lord and Master*. Not only is there no such class of ministers, but it is RARE TO FIND ONE who walks in the footsteps of Him whom he professes to serve; it is *rare to find one who even comprehends* the scope of his teaching who spake as never man spake. The mass of these nominal ministers of Christ aim constantly to maintain a position of authority and influence, which they have usurped, and not only strive to perpetuate, but to enlarge.” (p. 214, 215.)

Now on reading such outrageous accusa-



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tions as the above, against Christians, and Christian teachers, who does not feel inclined to exclaim with David—"Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" Is this Voltaire, or Bolingbroke, or Paine, who thus brings charges against Christianity, which, if true, would prove it one of the direst curses with which the world has ever been afflicted? Is not this almost the very language of the infamous editors of the French "Encyclopédie," who devoted their energies to rooting Christianity from the earth; who cast down the altar of God, and erected the worship of Reason in their "high places?" Indeed, it is only to the most rabid infidel assaults, that we can liken the "New Themes." The celebrated 15th and 16th chapters of the "Decline and Fall," are far less virulent than the pages under review. The author of the former work, would not have dared to make charges against Christianity, which



every man's common sense, and common observation, are sufficient to refute. Gibbon writes so much like a Christian, that it is hard to believe him an infidel: the author of "New Themes" writes so much like an infidel, that it is hard to believe him a Christian! Would any one suppose that a *Christian* could speak with such shocking irreverence (as in the following extract) of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian's faith? "In all this system, man is mainly treated and regarded as a lost sinner, as having fallen with his representative head, Adam, in his first transgression. Christ is mainly regarded as having become incarnate, as having endured the wrath of God, the scoffs of the Jews, the agony of the garden, the degrading death of the cross, and as having thus suffered and shed his blood as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men, thereby atoning for their offences, and purchasing remission of their offences, as having risen from the grave on



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the third day, and ascended to the right hand of the Father, there to be the head of the Church founded by his incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection." (p. 213.) Would not any one suppose that our author did not himself believe the doctrines thus arraigned? But he does believe them; for he calls them "truth." But how? We almost shudder to write it:—these blessed foundations of all Gospel light, and Gospel hope, which have been the support and consolation of the people of God, in all ages, since they were first sealed with the Saviour's blood on Calvary,—these doctrines, our author calls "a hard and bony skeleton of truth!" We give his own words, for we are anxious to do him entire justice in the premises:—"But this hard and bony skeleton of truth can never be exalted into Christianity until it is clothed with desires, affections, kindness, charity, love to God, and love to men. The mission of Christ was not merely incarnation, death,



resurrection, mediation, and redemption." (p. 214.)

Permit us to ask, how this skeleton is ever to be clothed, unless it be exhibited for man's reception and adoption. And how shall it be exhibited, but by the media of the pulpit and the press, and by private instruction? "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" But though the author of "New Themes" seems to speak so unlike St. Paul, yet he will justify us for referring to the latter, as final authority in the case. *He* tells us that, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching," to save men. And we must admit, in spite of our critic's apparently low estimate of "this hard and bony skeleton of truth," that we still prefer St. Paul's old themes, to our author's "New Themes."

But the most remarkable insult to Christian men, and Christian teachers, is yet to be exhibited to our readers.



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About twenty years ago, there died in Phila., a very opulent merchant, who bequeathed a portion of his property to the city, in trust, for the erection of a College for Orphans. Among other provisions in his will, was one which forbade the admission into the college of Christian ministers, even as visitors for an hour. This was felt to be a gross and gratuitous insult to this most respectable body of men. To interdict their agency as teachers in, or officers of, the institution, one would think to be quite enough to prevent any sectarian leaven from ever disturbing the educational arrangements of the College:—but to go beyond this;—to stigmatize clergymen as a proscribed class, who because they were God's servants, should never behold the operations of man's charity—so far as the founder's influence could exclude them—this was naturally considered a most unprovoked assault upon Christianity itself. Thoughtful men could not but fear that, all the good to be expect-



ed from an institution which displayed such an interdict on its gates, would be over balanced by the ill effects likely to be produced in the minds of the inmates, and the public at large. Thousands of children would grow up with the knowledge that it was only necessary for an applicant for an hour's admission into their walls, to be a Clergyman, to be rigorously excluded. The applicant might be a debauchee, a murderer, a drunkard, or an infidel, and the gates flew open to receive him. But if he were a minister of Jesus Christ, the humblest menial in the establishment was empowered, nay obliged, to shut the door in his face. Could the wit of man, or infidel man, "wise to do evil," devise a better plan to undermine Christianity than this? Would not the youthful student naturally argue, "my benefactor was a wise man, for he made his millions in the active competition of life; he was a good man, for he bequeathed some of these millions to



provide me a home and education; and it seems that his wisdom and his goodness both taught him that, a minister of Christ was unworthy even to enter the threshold of his college. If Christian ministers be so bad, or so untrustworthy, a set of men, Christianity must have made them so." And thus this youthful reasoner enters the world, already half convinced that Christian ministers are an evil, and that Christianity is an imposture. This argument is an unsound one; for we see not why a man should be esteemed either good or charitable for giving any particular direction to wealth which he has no longer the power to retain. But even *men* are not generally close reasoners: still less can we expect logical deductions from children. So much was the late Bishop White (a man whose praise is in all memories) impressed with these considerations, that he deemed it his duty to publish a letter to the Councils of



the city of Philadelphia, warning them of the evil consequence to be apprehended from the acceptance of the trust, and urging its rejection. Nay, so evident were the infidel tendencies of the prospective institution, that the Hon. Danl. Webster, acting for some of the connexions of the deviser, made a powerful argument before the Supreme Court of the United States, in favour of declaring the bequest null and void, on the very grounds that its acceptance and execution were unconstitutional, because *anti-Christian*. And yet, melancholy to relate, we find this avowed Christian, the author of "New Themes," instead of sharing in the indignation which we should suppose a Christian would feel at such an insult to Christians, and such a stab to Christianity, we find him actually triumphing over the insulted clergymen as follows:

"Take the case of Stephen Girard. We hear there is a feeling of resentment among



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many of the clergy of Pennsylvania,\* coupled with branding him always as an infidel, for his exclusion of their order from his college of orphans. We know nothing more of Girard's reasons beyond what he says, nor of his religious sentiments, but on the face of the transaction there is every reason why the clergy should bow in anguish before an event which speaks so loud a reproach to their order. That a man who could conceive so vast a project of charity towards children, the most favoured class under the dispensation of mercy ; that one who could so approximate the spirit of the apostle's declaration,—‘ Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,’ (James 1 : 27 ; ) that one who knew the world so well, and had lived

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\* We have heard many of the clergy speak upon this subject, and never heard an angry or resentful word from the lips of one of them upon this theme.—*Reviewer*.



in it so long, and desired that the orphans taken in charge should be taught '*the purest principles of morality*, so that, on their entrance into active life, they may, from inclination and habit, evince benevolence towards their fellow-creatures, and a love of truth, sobriety, and industry,'—should not be willing to commit this teaching to the clergy, or to their supervision, or even to their occasional inspection, should rather justify self-distrust and apprehension than a tone of reproach or condemnation." (p. 275.)

We must again remind our readers (for they may easily be excused for forgetting it) that the author of this paragraph is an avowed believer in Christianity. It will be seen that he can justify what we have never before heard justified, even by those who are entirely indifferent to the interests of religion. Our author says, he "knows nothing of Mr. Girard's religious sentiments." We marvel at this; for we thought they



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were very well known in Mr. Girard's lifetime. But is not the very extract which he gives, a sufficient indication of Mr. Girard's religious opinions? Is it not the very essence of infidelity, to cashier religious faith, and religious motives, and expect men to exercise the moral motives, from "education, inclination, and habit?" Does not our author here contrast Mr. Girard's character favourably with that of the Christian ministers who are excluded from his college? And yet we presume he must know that Mr. Girard, so far from being a Christian, lived in notorious neglect of Christian duties, of public worship, and of the observance of that day of rest and devotion, which even worldly men have agreed to respect. We do not see why we should hesitate to speak of that which Mr. Girard's habitual conduct so loudly proclaimed. If this admirer of Mr. Girard is ignorant as to his religious sentiments, he need not long remain in ignorance. There are plenty of



our more elderly citizens who can enlighten him on this subject. Does that man make any secret of his religious opinions, who names his ships, "Voltaire," "Rousseau," and "Helvetius?" His own relatives have not hesitated to let us know what *they* thought of his religious opinions, when they have dragged his will before the supreme tribunal of his country, for condemnation and abolishment, as the will of an infidel, and a foe to Christianity.

We can award no great credit to Mr. Girard for this much-lauded disposal of a portion of his worldly wealth. Whether the country will ever be a gainer by it, remains to be seen.

Certain we are that, from the above, and foregoing, extracts, no one would suppose that, in our author's opinion, faith in the merits of a Redeemer and sanctification of heart, were requisite to salvation, and the only reliable foundations of private and public morality.



## CHAPTER II.

IF our author be anxious to pass for a friend of Christianity, he must be singularly unfortunate in expressing himself. In addition to the instance, before narrated, of an eminent authority's advising a bookseller not to dispose of "New Themes," we have heard of two other concurrent instances, proving that we are not alone in our impression of the appearance and tendency of the book.

One publisher remarked to the writer, "I observe that infidels generally take that book:"—And no wonder, we thought, for it will help their cause more than their own efforts could ever do. The other case referred to was this: one of the largest publishers in an adjoining city, on having his attention called to "New Themes," re-



marked, "I have seen that book; a number of copies were sent to me; but, on looking over it, I thought that it was written by an infidel, and sent the copies back." Now *we* are satisfied that the book was written by a Christian, and one of exemplary life and conversation. But had we only his book to judge by, we should have come to a far different conclusion.

What is the favourite course adopted by infidels, to undermine the authority of the Scriptures? Is it not by endeavouring to abolish all written creeds, and theological formularies? A more bitter enemy to creeds we have never encountered. Who would expect such language from a Christian, as follows? Speaking of the description of the last judgment, he says:

"There is here nothing about churches, creeds, confessions, catechisms, prayer books; nothing of theology, faith, or doctrine." (p. 40). Does the author mean we are to do away with all these things? If



not, we see no pertinence in his language. It is evident that "works" must be the *test* on that great occasion. He says of protestants: "They have, almost without exception, exalted their own creeds, catechisms, confessions, liturgies, and forms of service above the precepts of their Master." &c. (p. 154, 155.) Is this true? Again: "This tendency [to enlarge or restrict the bounds of revelation] is displayed in later times, in the adoption of creeds, articles and confessions of faith, prayer-books, catechisms, and such formularies." (p. 229.) Let us here ask—how is the Bible to be taught, and how are Christians to be united in the reception of the ordinances of the Bible, without creeds and formularies? "The Bible," as Chillingworth well says, "is the meaning of the Bible." Must not all church associations be at once broken up, unless men can agree upon some points of union? But, if we understand our author, the loss of churches and religious bodies, would



prove a benefit, rather than an injury, to mankind. Our Christian author's great delight seems to be, to render as guilty and contemptible as he can, the character of his fellow Christians. In page 128, we are told how far inferior Christians are to the men of the world.

"The whole expenditure of Protestant congregations of almost every denomination, for every purpose, religious and philanthropic, is derived in a large degree, from those who are not acknowledged to be real disciples of Christ."

Such a statement as this, would be amusing, were not graver feeling engendered by such assertions; but we have more of the same kind. "It is farther to be noted that very many of the benevolent and Christian enterprises of the day are in fact more indebted to the liberality of men not professing to be Christians, than to those who are." (p. 263, 264.) Now to seriously deny such statements as these, would be



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trifling with our readers. But the poor Christian is not yet discharged from the pillory and the lash: if our author can possibly add another stroke, he is sure to inflict it, and so, as above, Christians are stated to be worse than men of the world, a little farther on, they are declared to be worse even than infidels: and of all the motley crew of blasphemers against God and his Christ, whom has this avowed Christian selected, as presenting a favourable contrast to his fellow disciples? Who but the infamous Tom Paine! But listen: "To go no farther back than Paine, a long list of men might be formed whose zeal for humanity made them infidels, or whose infidelity begot their zeal for human welfare. In general these men were not ignorant of, and could not be blind to the claims of Christianity, upon a survey of all history since its advent, to being considered the greatest benefactor of mankind the world has ever known. \* \* They find Christians arrayed



against their plans and they immediately array themselves against Christianity." (p. 267.) This rather caps the climax.

Our readers have probably, before this, suspected the "Socialist" tendencies of the volume. We have pretty clear indications of them on page 242:

"The doctrine that property, real and personal, must, under all circumstances remain inviolate, always under the ever watchful vigilance of the law, and its invaders subject to the severest penalties of dungeon or damages, may be very essential to the maintenance of our present social system, but totally disregards the consideration that labour, the poor man's capital, his only property should, as his only means of securing a comfortable subsistence, be also under the special care and safeguard of the law." Would our author prefer a "social system" which would *not* hold property, real and personal inviolate?

The contradictions and inconsistencies of



the critic are so frequent, that it is often difficult to ascertain what his real opinions are. Let us quote some instances. We have seen above, what he says against theology, creeds, &c. yet, to our surprise, we find such sentiments as these:

"It is his duty to supply himself with all the help he can both from books and living teachers" (p. 42). That is in the study of the Scriptures: now, unless some make theology their study, how can any helps be afforded to those who desire to study the Scriptures? What respect is due to the opinions of a writer—nay, how shall we ascertain what are the opinions of a writer—who, on page 59, reprobates Theological studies on this wise—"What do we see then in Christendom? \* \* a vast accumulation of duties to be performed; \* \* of doctrines to be understood and believed; of traditions, glosses, comments, explanations: a vast array of biblical learning and



criticism in which every word is examined, weighed, and defined. We have creeds, confessions, liturgies, prayer-books, catechisms, forms and platforms of faith and discipline" &c. and then, on page 136, eats his own words thus: "We mean not to urge any objections to theology in itself, nor to deny that our spiritual teachers should be versed in such knowledge. They may by such learning be more thoroughly furnished to every good work, and be enabled to prosecute their labours with more entire success among all classes of men." So that it is well, after all, that we did not give our Theological libraries at once to the flames, after perusal of the preceding pages:—but not so fast; for, at page 212, Theology is again cashiered: "A system of technical divinity has been constructed which rivals in complexity all the machinery of the Romish Church. From this system by a series of strainings, condensations, and extractions, they have produced the cate-



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chisms, guides, and various formularies of the different churches."

And this is a fair specimen of the *mosaic* fabric of the whole work :—Statements, and counter-statements; affirmatives, and negatives, upon the same questions, over and over again. Is a writer of this loose, rambling, illogical, cast of mind, competent to handle questions of political economy, which have puzzled the wisest heads? We must admit that, on one point, the writer is generally consistent with himself; and that is, in his lavish abuse of ministers of Christ and Christians at large. He may lose sight of other game, which he has started, or he may occasionally relent at his own severity, and, as in the above instance, when theology is almost expiring under the knife, a reviving cordial may be administered, which, for a time, restores animation, again to be suspended, in a few pages farther on, by another cruel blow. But for the poor Christian, there is neither rest nor



security. For him the tomahawk and the scalping knife are always ready, and through the fog and the mist, the marsh and the mire, of a thick, not to say heavy, volume, the chase is maintained, with a keen relish, which Hamlet denominates, a "feeling of the business." Yet let us not deny to the credit of our author's better feelings, that, after his victim has been hunted to the death, after he has been "hanged, drawn and quartered," some compunctious visitings are evinced in such sentences as the following:

"We know that very many, in all ages of Christianity, have distinguished themselves far above the errors of their respective churches. No church has more to boast in this respect than that of England. It is well that the eternal welfare of the members does not depend on the character of the Church to which they may belong. If so, what church or sect could save its members? not one!—but least, of all, perhaps, the Church of England" (p. 148, 149.) It will



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be perceived that, our critic here contrasts the character of the *church*, with the character of the *members* of the church; and yet, only 13 pages farther on, he tells us: "But whatever may be said of the guilt of the Church, if a church can be guilty, the responsibility lies upon its members. They are the real stewards, to whom the various talents are committed for which account will be rendered at the coming of our Lord." Now what composes a church but the members of a church?

Our author blames the Church of England for not, as he thinks, providing adequately for the poor: "Whatever may be said of the wisdom or the mercy or the statesmanship displayed in the treatment of English poor, the whole constitutes such a disgrace to the established Church and to Protestantism, as can never be adequately characterized. During three centuries, she has shut her eyes from beholding, and shut her ears from hearing, and withheld her



hands from removing the woes of ten generations of increasing millions of suffering poor." (p. 143, 144.) Has our author the hardihood to seriously make such charges as this, and many others of like kind? But mark his inconsistency! After thus blaming the church for not doing this, he goes on to assert, on page 161, that it is not the duty of the church to do it.—"The truth is, the work of the real disciples of Christ must be performed by them individually, and not by the Church." Again: "Nor can that love of men ever dwell in a corporation or ecclesiastical organization which should glow in the bosom of individual Christians. It was not so intended, and is not so inculcated." (p. 162.) Then why should the Church of England be blamed for not doing that, which it was not "intended" nor "inculcated" it should do? We have too good an opinion of the intelligence of our readers, to think it necessary to confute, at any length, the sweeping



charges thus made against the Church of England. Yet, hereafter, we shall have occasion to notice our author's strictures upon British Pauperism, when we shall review the preceding remarks. But let us here ask, how our critic can possibly know the truth of such charges as these: "What is not deemed the duty of the Church, has ceased to be regarded as the duty of individuals." (p. 149.) "The poor are regarded as a burden upon society, to be diminished or got rid of by any course short of murder. They are not deemed to have any claims as fellow men or fellow Christians, in a Christian land. \* \* This is the English feeling in regard to the poor." (p. 150.) Is it not possible that the members of the Church of England, and other British Christians, are, and have always, been engaged in ameliorating the condition, and supplying the necessities, of the poor? Can our author *know* that there is no such benevolence in existence? Is it not possible that Mr. A.



relieves one or more families, by his alms, and may not Mr. B., Mr. C., and ten thousands of others, be so employed, for all that our critic knows to the contrary? How does he know but that, Christians, in their individual capacity, are continually carrying out the very principle he recommends, of personal visitation and private relief of the poor? If they *are* so engaged, would they think it necessary to send documentary evidence of the fact, to the unknown author of the "New Themes?" Does our censurer profess to be informed of the private benefactions, and visitations to indigence, of even his next door neighbour? Can he tell what is done in his own street, or neighbourhood, or city? How much less, then, can he constantly supervise the doings of many millions of people in Great Britain! We have said that, our author cannot tell what is doing, even in his own neighbourhood, and city; and we now proceed to give a striking proof of his ignorance on this



point. Speaking of "the responsibilities of Christians in the United States, in regard to the suffering classes," he says: "Have we not among us those who are hungry, and require to be fed; those that are naked, and require to be clothed; those that are fainting with thirst that require a cup of cold water; those that are sick and in prison and require to be visited? Alas! how many poor are already among us, and how fearfully the numbers are increasing! And what has been done for them by American Christians upon whom their Master has heaped such bounteous favours." (p. 173.) Certainly the inference here is that, little or nothing is done by American Christians, for the poor. Now let us examine a little into this matter. Let us take the author's own latitude (not in *assertions!* this requires more hardihood than we can summon) Philadelphia, and its environs, and endeavour to form an estimate of what some few Christians in Philadelphia, are doing for the poor. In addition



to the vast sum of \$189,000 distributed to the poor, by the public authorities, in 1851, of which Christians, of course, contribute a large proportion, there are in Philadelphia, upon a moderate estimate, two hundred charitable societies conducted by private agency; (of which, about one hundred and sixty are directly connected with Christian churches;) whose duty it is to "clothe the naked," and provide for the destitute. We have reason to believe that, at least twelve thousand poor children (we do not include those who belong to the "better off" classes) are weekly gathered together on Sunday, for religious instruction. It is probably much within bounds to say that, five thousand five hundred male and female visitors are employed, more or less, in visiting the lanes and alleys of our city and suburbs, ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of the poor. In one case, alone, more than two hundred ladies divide the city and suburbs



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into sections, and appoint visitors, whose self-imposed duty it is, to visit every dwelling where the existence of poverty is known, or suspected. These excellent women not only relieve immediate wants, but give counsel, calculated to improve the house-keeping of the improvident, or uninstructed. Neglected children are brought into schools; intemperate parents are urged to abstain from the intoxicating cup; the duty of public worship, and the claims of Christianity, are enforced upon the minds of the poor. For the young, places of profitable industry are provided; and the infirmities of age are rendered more tolerable, by the hand of charity, and the voice of compassion. These ladies, during the year ending Oct. 21, 1851, had under their charge 856 families; they made 7,200 visits to the abodes of indigence; they "clothed the naked," by the donation of 3,337 garments. There can be no objection urged here against interested agents; nothing said



against "Societies;"—for, be it noted, all the labourers referred to above, are performing a self imposed duty. So far from receiving any pecuniary reward, they are always liable to calls upon their own means, to relieve the destitute. If their associated character displease our author, let them be considered in the light of individuals, each working in his or her own sphere, and thus fulfilling *their* duty however those who help to provide the means expended, may be neglecting theirs. And thus we answer our critic's insulting query "What are Christians doing?" They are doing this, and they are doing much more; and if he be ignorant of such operations, going on perhaps within a square of his own door, what can be the amount of his experience among the poor? But we have referred to but a very small portion of what Christians are doing in Philadelphia, for the poor. Does our author know a single Christian family of his acquaintance, whose master or mis-



tress is not, more or less, in the habit of visiting the abodes of the poor? Let us give him a little more insight into the philanthropic history of his own city. He speaks of neglected prisoners: "Have we not among us those that are sick and in prison, and require to be visited?" (p. 173.) Is he aware that there has existed in Philadelphia, for more than eighty years, a society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons, of which the late Bishop White was, for forty-nine years, president? Does he know that that society, besides being the parent of improved prison discipline throughout the world,—lauded by Howard, and followed in England,—has at all times employed in our prisons, a band of men, who labour to cheer the lonely convict's cell, and reconcile him to that society which he has injured, and to that God whom, too often, he has forsaken, and almost forgotten? Does our author never meet with these men in the prisons? And



does he never encounter the visitors of the poor, when he takes his round among the hovels of the destitute? He says that: "If the preacher and people in our rich and well ordered congregations were, in the midst of the gravest sermon," suddenly brought to a sense of their duty that they "would rush in a mass, preacher and people, from their splendid edifice, to the courts and alleys and cellars, to the abodes of destitution, ignorance crime and suffering." (p. 199, 200.) Now, if he attend church, which, indeed, would be highly inconsistent with the spirit of the above comments, is he not aware that he is, perhaps, surrounded with those who have been employed in such visitation, during the week, and who have wearied themselves in the Sabbath School, by instructing ignorant children in the way of salvation? Has he not met with such visitors in the abodes of the poor, during the week? Has he not met such teachers in the Sabbath School—languishing, perhaps, for want of male instructors?



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Had we space and time, we could exhibit a statement of what is accomplished, in various ways, for the poor, in the United States, which would surprise those who have not paid attention to the subject. In New York, our largest city, it is computed that one of every seven receives aid from his or her fellow citizens.

Let us note, whilst upon this subject, another instance of our author's many inconsistencies. If his exhortations mean any thing, they advocate the giving of money for charitable purposes. Yet he blames those who advocate the same thing, and endeavour to increase the amount of benefactions to these and kindred objects!

On page 131, he tells us: "A man may occupy a respectable position in the Church, and in the society around it, if he contributes liberally, when called upon, to all the numerous demands which religious and charitable associations make upon him." Now we should suppose it would please



our author, that men could be made to see the propriety of contributing liberally to good objects. But not so : it is very hard to please our critic ;—for he goes on to say : “It would be hard to conjecture how much of the money levied in this way would be got, if it were left to flow in solely by the spontaneous movements of the contributors. Certainly a very small portion.” How does he know this? How can he prove, or what right has he to suppose, that any of this money, thus contributed, is given unwillingly? Or, supposing that men *are* induced, by persuasives, to see more clearly the duty of giving, than they would otherwise do, is not this well? Is not this the very object of the author’s book—to complain of insufficient alms, and to urge their increase? How long would the world have been without a Saviour, had it been left to the “spontaneous movements” of men to have sent for him? This is an inconsistency. But our author



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seems to have a suicidal facility of running from bad to worse, and so on pages 132, 133, still pursuing the same "New Theme," we have the following remarkable—no, not "remarkable," after what we have seen;—the following contradiction:

"We protest against Christianity being made responsible for this mode of operation whatever of good or evil may be the result. It is rather an excrescence fastened upon Christianity by human frailty, and being so attached it is regarded by too many beholders who take not the trouble to examine as a part of the Christian system. Let the probe be freely applied, and it will be found this excrescence is no part of the system which it overshadows, conceals, and deforms." Now if we know what censure is, this is strong censure; and yet, to our wonder, we are told in the very next page:—"We would not condemn, we would not discourage this kind of effort; it may lead some to think they are fulfill-



ing all their Christian duties, and thus lead them astray; but the general tendency must be to open the channels of good affections, to liberalize the mind, and to strengthen benevolent emotions." Surely, this is strange reasoning! It is an "excrescence" of "human frailty,"—yet he would not "condemn" it;—it "conceals and deforms Christianity,"—but he will not "too much disparage" it;—may lead men "astray,"—but he will not "discourage" it! This is of a piece with the blame attached to the Church of England, for not doing what, we are shortly after assured, it was not "intended nor inculcated" that she should do. The old man in the fable, who found it so hard to please the three travellers, with the disposition of his mule, his son, and his burden, would, at once, have thrown up his hands in utter despair, if, instead of three objectors, he had found the three contradictory objections united in the person of one man!



## CHAPTER III.

LET us now consider, as briefly as possible, the subject of pauperism, *per se*; which is the principal theme of our author, and, indeed, the substratum of the whole work. The *causes* of pauperism, we shall consider hereafter. How, by what instrumentality, shall the poor be relieved, is the question now to be inquired into. Our author is of the opinion that, the poor are to be visited and relieved at their own homes. That this is true, to some extent;—that some should remain at home, and be relieved at home, we grant. That this can generally be the case;—under such conditions as English pauperism presents, for instance,—we deny. Our author also insists that, the poor are to be visited by Christians, each acting on his or her



own responsibility. 1. This work is not to be done by the Church : " The truth is, the work of the real disciples of Christ must be performed by them individually, and not by the Church." (p. 161).

2. It is not to be done by the public authorities : "American Christians \* \* have, as in England since the Reformation," turned over the poor "to the public authorities." "Christians, as such, have thus repudiated their highest obligations." (p. 173.)

3. It is not to be done by delegation, or by societies : "Protestants fulfil their charities, not personally, but by delegation, or by machinery; they visit the sick, feed the hungry, and clothe the naked by joint-stock associations &c." (p. 187, 188).

Now we think we can show that our author is mistaken in all these premises. Charity *must* be administered through "Churches;" through the "public authorities;" and through "societies." A hasty preliminary glance, will sufficiently prove this.



1. How many deserving poor, who would blush to expose their poverty to a strange visitor, are relieved from the Church's poor-fund, through the agency of the pastor!

2. If the "public authorities" did not require *all* to aid the poor, by the medium of taxation, the avaricious and niggardly would refuse their quota, and the liberal and generous would be obliged to bear the whole burden.

3. Unless the poor at home are reached through the agency of "societies," they will never, save in isolated instances, be reached at all; as will be shown hereafter.

We shall first show very clearly that, our author's theory, that the visitation of the poor should be performed individually, by all those who are not poor, is impracticable. This must be the plan which he recommends; for he makes such visitation the duty of every Christian; and as it is the duty of every man to be a Christian; *ergo*,



it is every man's duty to become a visitor of the poor.

Our critic seems to make the great error of dividing men into two great classes only ; —the rich, and the poor. But, there are very few in any community, who can properly be called, "rich;"—very few who have the command of their own time.

Of twenty men—not paupers—in any community, nineteen are only kept from pauperism, by the devotion of their time to labour, of various kinds; of the counting room, the shop, the loom, &c. If these men ceased work, they and their families must starve, or be fed by the twentieth man, who is "rich." His wealth, however, must soon come to an end; for general bankruptcy would result from a cessation of labour. Our author's theory, therefore, cannot be carried out, because it is plainly impossible. It does not at all detract from the weight of this argument to say that, men engaged thus in labour, can find *some*



time in which to visit the poor.—Some few can, and do, and this is well: but the great majority do not even find time for sufficient rest, and relaxation, after exhausting toil.

What then is to be done? Obviously, the poor must be visited by the agents of “public authorities,” or “joint stock associations,” or *not at all*.

2. We assert that, if this theory of general individual visitation of the poor, were practicable, it would be inexpedient: it would aggravate and increase the very evil which it seeks to mitigate and relieve.

Suppose that, by some wonderful change of fortune, every man in Philadelphia (not a pauper) now obliged to follow some occupation for a living, were to find himself in independent circumstances; and able to dispose of his time as he thought fit. Suppose—by a still more extravagant stretch of the imagination—that each such enfranchised individual should provide himself with a



copy of our author's "New Themes;" and, anxious to fulfil his responsibilities, should immediately commence a vigorous visitation of the poor; pouring in the "oil and wine," of which the editor speaks so feelingly; by which, we suppose, he means money and clothes. What would be the result, at the conclusion of the first year of this golden age? It does not require much prophetic ken to give the result, in "advance of the annual statement." Labour, would, to a great extent, come to an end:—for why should men work, when their wants are supplied without work? Intemperance would stride over the country "like an armed man," and Pauperism would be increased a hundred fold.

Society, for its own protection, and for the good of the poor, would have to do exactly what it does now;—appoint from its number, agents; whose duty it should be to become thoroughly acquainted with the habits, the worthiness, or unworthiness, of



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applicants for relief; and acting upon this knowledge, relieve those who were fit objects of charity, and compel the unworthy, the idle, and the vicious, to reformation and labour. To know how to really benefit the poor, requires time, knowledge, discretion, and no little tact. As few men possess all of these qualifications, it is not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, to employ agents, paid, or unpaid, acting through the "public authorities," or through "societies," whose duty it shall be, to appropriate the alms of society, to those who really need such aid; to endeavour to reform the vicious, and to find labour for the unemployed. Such agencies we have; and they are continually accomplishing a vast amount of good.

But all such agencies excite our critic's ire; and he would fain, apparently, have us disband them at once. We may do so, and we shall be inclined to do so, when—he can "show us a more excellent way."



In the meantime, Christians are not so neglectful of individual visitation of the poor, as he appears to think. Indeed, he seems to have been most unfortunate in his experience of Christian character, both clerical and lay. What description of ministers can *he* have known who is obliged to give them such a character as this: "We shall be equally at a loss to find *any class of them* who are imitating the ministry of their Lord and Master. Not only is there no such class of ministers but *it is rare to find one who walks in the footsteps of Him whom he professes to serve*; it is *rare to find one who even comprehends the scope of his teaching who spake as never man spake.*" If he never met with, did he never hear, of such ministers (to go no farther than his own city and vicinity) as the Whites, the Bedells, the Potters, the Alexanders, the Millers, and the Greens,—who have, heretofore, had the credit of "walking in the footsteps of Him whom they professed to serve?" Our au-



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thor complains grievously of the "bitterness, virulence, and evil speaking" which prevail among Christians. But he must remember that, at that time, Christians had not the advantage of the example afforded by the charitable and kindly tone of "New Themes." If, hereafter, they should fail in the matter of charity, they may almost give themselves up as incorrigible ; or, certainly, very hard to be cured. If their bosoms are ever ruffled by the storms of evil passions, let them read a few pages of "New Themes," as a composing draught ; and lay down the amiable volume, calmer, "wiser, and better, men."

Let us now endeavour, if possible, to ascertain the source of this great evil—Pauperism. He is the wise physician who, not satisfied with temporary palliatives, seeks to remove the cause of the disease. His office is a higher one, than the mechanical occupation of satisfying the thirst produced by the heat of the fever. He



labours to remove the fever itself;—knowing that, with returning health, the weakness and disorder consequent upon disease, will be rectified, as a matter of course. Now there are causes of poverty, which, in this imperfect state, we can never expect to be wholly exempt from; and these we class generally under the title of *unavoidable pauperism*. Let it be understood here, once for all, that no disgraceful association is to be attached to the term, “pauperism.” A pauper is, a poor person; in the proper signification of the word. It is not the *being* a pauper which disgraces; the manner in which one became, and the reasons why one continues, a pauper, *may* be disgraceful. The term signifies a state, or condition, merely. We mention this to anticipate any objection which may arise in the mind of a reader not accustomed to weigh technical terms, against our calling the working poor,—*paupres*. A proportion, therefore, of the pauperism of any community, or



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country, is unavoidable. But this proportion we believe to be small. We believe that, three fourths of the pauperism and crime of the United States, and of London and Liverpool at least, is caused by intemperance. What the proportion may be in the smaller towns, and rural districts, of Great Britain, we cannot state accurately; perhaps as high as the percentage just mentioned.

Let us examine a few British statistics on this subject. So far back as a century—"In 1751 it was affirmed that upwards of 4000 dealers who sold spirituous liquors without license had been convicted of the penalty of £10 each from Jan. 1749 to Jan. 1750. According to a list of private Gin shops on the best calculation they amounted to upwards of 17,000 in the bills of mortality." *Wade's British History* p. 438.

To come to more recent times :

"The consumption of spirits in the United Kingdom was at the rate of .056 gallons



[per head] in 1802, .049 in 1812 and .046 in 1821. Both in Scotland and Ireland however especially in the latter, there was no doubt a large additional consumption of illicit spirits. Of Rum the average consumption of each individual was in England .023 gallons, in 1802, .029 in 1812, and .017 in 1821."—*Knight's History of England*, vol. 8. p. 729.

"The barrels of beer brewed in 1836 in London were about 3,000,000 bls. This would give an average of 2 bls. or about 76 gallons of beer per annum, for every inhabitant of the metropolis, man, woman, and child. This is of course beyond the mark, but not so much as one would at first imagine."—*Knight's London* vol. 4. p. 3.

The large proportion of this malt liquor consumed by the very poor, of course, forms an important item in our calculation. It may be objected here, that Beer is rather an article of diet, than an unnecessary luxury, with an Englishman. This impression



is erroneous ; as will appear from the following unexceptionable testimony. Baron Liebig, in his chemical lectures, says :

“ We can prove with mathematical certainty that as much flour or meal as can lie on the point of a table knife is more nutritious than five measures (about eight or ten quarts !) of the best Bavarian beer ; that a person who is able daily to consume that amount of beer obtains from it in a whole year, in the most favourable case, exactly the amount of nutritive constituents which is contained in a five pound loaf of bread, or three pounds of flesh.” In other words, a whole year’s drinking of beer, strengthens the system as much as a loaf of bread : or, say 40 cents worth of bread, is worth \$180 worth of beer ! What vast sums are thus expended by the poor, on a mere article of luxury, and source of intemperance. Of tobacco, too, another article of luxury the average consumption in Great Britain, in 1821, was 1.443 ounces. In 1839, the po-



lice arrested for drunkenness, in London, 13,952 men and 7,317 females=21,269. Notwithstanding the misery directly attributable to the use of intoxicating drinks, the wretched victims of intemperance have stubbornly refused to part with their poison. When the Gin Act of 1731 was passed, for the purpose of checking excessive drinking, "The populace soon broke through all restraint. Though no license was obtained, no duty paid, the liquor continued to be sold in all corners of the streets. Informers were intimidated by the threats of the people, and the justices of the peace either from ignorance or corruption neglected to put the law in execution."—*Wade's British History*.

"In 1840, England made about ten millions of gallons of spirits. Scotland made about seven millions of gallons, and Ireland about nine millions of gallons. In England, Ireland, and Scotland duty was paid in 1840, on the following quantities of spirits,



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viz : Rum 2,830,263 gallons ; brandy, 1,167,756 gallons ; Geneva, 18,640 gallons ; on other foreign spirits 8,758 gallons ; and on British, Irish, and Scotch spirits, 25,190,843 gallons ; making in the whole nearly thirty millions of gallons ; upon which the duty amounted to about eight millions of pounds sterling !" — *Putnam's World's Progress. Parl. Returns.*

Can we form any idea of the amount of money expended by the lower classes in Great Britain, for intoxicating drinks ? The computation has been already made for us. From an excellent discourse entitled *Drinking Usages*, by Bishop Potter, of Pennsylvania, we make the following extract : "It is computed by Mr. Porter, an English statistician of distinguished ability, but of no special interest in the subject which we are now discussing, that the labouring people of Great Britain, exclusive of the middle and higher classes, expend no less than £53,000,000 (\$250,000,000)



every year, on alcoholic liquors and tobacco!!" What a startling statement is this! Can there any longer remain any doubt as to the prime cause of Pauperism in Great Britain and Ireland? And yet, our author abuses the Church of England, and English Christians at large, for the amount and evils of pauperism! He says that: "the Church of England has signally failed in the fulfilment of her chief duty:" (p. 161). that she has "repudiated the charge" of the poor. He complains that "English Christians have done nothing worth naming to redeem the poor from their abject condition." (p. 161.) Many such *Jeremiades* as these there are, which display about the same amount of wisdom and charity, as distinguish the charges against Christian ministers and Christian men.

Here are the oppressed miserable beings,—in whose cause our author's generous soul is "up in arms,"—making merry on \$250,000,000 of dollars worth of rum and to-



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bacco, whilst their mourning champion, weeping over their wretchedness, "refuses to be comforted." On page 165, we are told: "in every society where Christian duties are discharged with even moderate faithfulness, the poor will be reduced to the smallest number possible. Is this so in England? Is it necessary is it unavoidable that there should be three millions of suffering poor in Great Britain? Is it inevitable that every tenth person should be a pauper? We say no: That there should not be in Great Britain nor in Ireland more than a pauper to every hundred inhabitants."

We join issue with the above "No." We assert that it *is* "necessary and unavoidable" that there should be "millions" of paupers in Great Britain, so long as the labouring classes spend their wages in rum and tobacco.

Our author goes on to remark: "We say that this subject is seldom, if ever, ap-



proached, as it should be, in its Christian aspect." Let us be less ambitious then, and endeavour to approach it in its common sense "aspect." And this mention of common sense, gives us an opportunity of exhibiting to the reader the most remarkable feature of this most remarkable book. We have seen what stress is laid by writers on the subject of Pauperism, upon the use of alcoholic drinks, as the great producing cause of poverty and crime. Will it be believed that, in the book under review, of 279 pages, the great subject of which is Pauperism—*this prime cause of Pauperism, Intemperance is not once mentioned!*—save in an incidental way, on page 271, to which we shall presently refer. If there be any other notice, even of the existence of such an evil, a diligent examination has not enabled us to find it. This is a fact for the next edition of "Curiosities of Literature." A work upon Pauperism without treating on Intemperance! This is, indeed, the



“play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out.” This is like a medical essay upon the plague, without touching the question of *contagion*.

How differently the same things strike different minds! Bishop Potter tells us: “In wasting \$250,000,000 every year, the labouring population of Britain put it beyond the power of any government to avert, from multitudes of them, the miseries of want.” (*Drinking Usages* p. 12.) The author of “New Themes,” on the other hand, does not deem it necessary to even advert (except once, incidentally) to this prolific parent of the evil he deplures! He may take a lesson from the Bishop in his future essays: and yet, he seems to have little respect for authorities,—clerical or literary. Where he does once mention intemperance, he cannot do it without having another fling at his favourite game, the poor Christians. He says: (p. 271) “Thus Christianity sits enthroned on high



places, while poverty is struggling below. Christians find matters very well arranged for them; they are reaping the fruits of sobriety, economy, industry, and honesty, while the multitudes below are suffering the consequences of idleness, ignorance, vagrancy, intemperance, dishonesty, and crime." Was there ever a more absurd paragraph? Naughty Christians! Are you not ashamed of yourselves, to be sitting up there, reaping the fruits of your "sobriety, economy, industry, and honesty?" Come down, at once! and suffer the consequences of "idleness, ignorance, vagrancy, intemperance, dishonesty, and crime!" This is one of the many luminous and profound sentences that meet our eye, wherever we turn over these 279 pages of text, and 100 pages of "Notes by the Editor." *Pur nobile fratrum!*

If our author had only condescended to be as communicative, as is the good Bishop, we could have helped him out of his



“slough of despond,” some time ago. If he had told us, that his band of 3,000,000 pensioners, and those likely to add to their number, were indulging themselves in \$250,000,000 dollars worth of rum and tobacco, we should have suggested that, the paupers, and those of the labouring classes who help this consumption, should deny themselves these luxuries, and divide the purchase money among the 3,000,000 paupers; which would give each one, \$83 per annum; to which add, at least double that sum, lost in idleness, and the \$250 per annum, thus accruing to each former pauper, would, at once, elevate him above pauperism.

Now, having glanced at the subject of British Pauperism, let us look at matters nearer home; and see whether this hydra headed monster, INTEMPERANCE,—devouring industry, happiness and prosperity,—exist among us. If it do, this volume has not made us any wiser upon the subject: but our faith



in our author's infallibility, has been shaken by this last startling *exposé*, and we begin to suspect that Solomon will still retain his ancient laurels. With regard to intemperance in the United States, the Hon. Edward Everett tells us what it has done for us in ten years. "1. It has cost the nation a direct expenditure of 600,000,000 of dollars. 2. It has cost the nation an indirect expense of 600,000,000 of dollars. 3. It has destroyed 300,000 lives. 4. It has sent 100,000 children to the poor house. 5. It has consigned at least 150,000 persons to the jails and penitentiaries. 6. It has made at least 1000 maniacs. 7. It has instigated to the commission of 1,500 murders. 8. It has caused 2000 persons to commit suicide. 9. It has burned, or otherwise destroyed, property to the amount of 10,000,000 of dollars. 10. It has made 200,000 widows, and one million of orphan children." Mr. Justice Grier said: "It is not necessary to array the appalling statis-



tics of misery, pauperism and crime which have their origin in the use and abuse of ardent spirits." Let us look at our own state, in this respect. Bishop Potter says—after referring to the sums expended in Great Britain for rum and tobacco—"There is little doubt that the amount, directly or indirectly, consumed in Pennsylvania annually, for the same indulgence equals \$10,000,000—a sum which, could it be saved for four successive years, would pay the debt which now hangs, like an incubus on the energies of the Commonwealth." *Drinking Usages*, p. 12.

Let us now come quite home, to our own city, (Philadelphia) and see if we cannot find some employment for the zealous energies of our enthusiastic reformer, the author of "New Themes." We quote from an able discourse entitled the "Throne of iniquity," by the Rev. Albert Barnes, of Philadelphia. "The exact sum received in the city and county of Philadelphia for tavern



licenses in the year 1851, was \$66,302; the whole sum in the state was about \$108,000. The expenses for prosecuting for crime, and for the support of pauperism, consequent on intemperance, in the city and county, was, for the same year, as accurately as it can be computed, \$365,000. As showing the nature and the extent of the burdens resting on the community as the result of the license system, and the traffic in ardent spirits, it may be proper to present some statistics respecting the Philadelphia Alms House; an institution that may be properly regarded as furnishing a *fair* illustration of the working of the present system throughout the land. It is taken from the report of the Guardians of the Poor.—“The number of cases treated in the Hospital in the Blockley Alms House, in 1851, was 5000. Intemperate males, 2709, women, 897, total 3,606, out of 5,000. There were also of mania-a-potu with slight delirium, 343; do with hallucination, 114;



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violent mania, 157:—total, mania-a-potu, 614."

Nearly four thousand persons supported at the public expense, in a single city and county, as the result of the traffic in ardent spirits, and more than six hundred afflicted with the most dreadful form of insanity that ever comes upon man:—a business tolerated, protected, sustained by law, and requiring heavy taxes upon the sober and industrious for its support! What other conceivable business is there that in a civilized and Christian land would be protected or tolerated, which would, in a single year, in a single county, dethrone the intellect in more than six hundred cases, and convert more than six hundred citizens into frightful maniacs?" (p. 10).

Judge Kelley stated, on a public occasion, that :they "were then in the midst of a Criminal Court, and that, without exception, every case that had come before him, resulted from intemperance!" Of 5,199



received into the Blockley Alms House, in one year, 2,323 were drunk when received!! Is it not passing strange that our critic did not think proper to advert to these facts, as accounting for the great increase of Pauperism amongst us?



## CHAPTER IV.

WE now approach a subject the importance of which can hardly be over rated, and which naturally engages much of our author's attention ;—the BRITISH POOR LAWS. We have already seen that, he advocates individual, unassociated, visitation of the poor :—he considers that, the proper care takers of the necessitous, are neither “Churches,” nor “Public Authorities,” nor “Societies.” We think we have sufficiently proved that, his theory is both impracticable, and inexpedient, if practicable. We shall now endeavour to treat, as briefly as possible, a very extensive and comprehensive subject :—the PAUPERISM OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Whilst it is an error to suppose, as some do, that the burden of the poor first became a subject of public notice, on the suppres-



sion of the Monasteries and Religious Houses, by Henry 8th, 1536-40, yet the vast accession of paupers thrown upon society, by this suppression, increased the pre-existing evil to such a degree, as to force upon the public mind the necessity of its abatement. Of the state of morals at this period we have a most gloomy picture :

“The prisoners in the kingdom confined for debts and crimes are stated to have been 60,000, an incredible number when the smallness of the population is considered. Harrison asserts that 72,000 criminals were executed during this reign for theft and robbery, which would amount to nearly 2000 a year.” *Wade's British History*.

After nearly seventy years experience of the ill effects of trusting to an irregular and voluntary mode of alms giving, after trying for so long a time our author's plan of the “spontaneous movements of contributors,” it was found necessary to make the “public authorities,” the almoners of the



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nation at large. So that this "New Theme" of our author's, was "laid upon the table," some 250 years since. The expediency of such "public agency," strikes us as most obvious. It was impossible for those applied to for charity, to examine into the validity of the beggar's claims. The rural population, were in continual danger of violence, from disappointed mendicity; the female inmates of the farm house, were exposed to insult; and the sturdy beggar of the day, became the desperate burglar of the night. And here let us notice, *currente calamo*, our author's objection to the arrangement by which each parish (now, "union") is charged with the support of its own poor, only. He complains, "that they have made charity dependent upon the parish boundaries." How can it be otherwise, if it be proper to check imposition, and discourage the growth of pauperism? If the parish officers, respectively, have cognizance of, and provide for, their own pensioners, they can secure the



substance of the industrious and deserving, from the selfish appropriation of the idle and vicious. But, if the pauper be allowed to claim from every parish poor's purse, within the reach of his improvidence, profligacy, or rapacity, the industrious will be defrauded, the unworthy will monopolize, and the deserving starve, or lean upon the already over burdened. If there be any thing clear to our mind, it is the necessity of "public agency" and "parish boundaries." (Now, "Union" Limits).

So, at least, have reasoned the sagacious statesmen of England; who must be allowed to be as good judges of the matter, as either the writer of "New Themes," or his present reviewer. By the Act 14 Elizabeth, Cap. 5, power was given to the justices to lay a general assessment for the support of the poor; and by the Act 43 Eliz. Cap. 2, the Poor Laws were systematized, and their administration defined. This celebrated Act, has formed the basis of subsequent



Poor Law legislation : a department of the English code, which has been matured by the benevolence, experience, sagacity, retrospection, and prospection, of some of the wisest men whom England has ever seen. Men to whom, however highly exalted in position, nothing that affected the interests of humanity was little ; and who were equally at home at the parish poor table, enforcing distributive justice, and on the floor of the Senate, expounding the principles of legislation. Without impertinence, we may fairly appeal to the reader, *a priori*, whether these legislators, prompted by philanthropy, and taught by experience, eye-witnesses, ear-witnesses, heart-witnesses, of the facts before them, were not likely to be as good judges of the wants of the English poor, as our American critic, who comes forward, at this day, to cast contempt upon their counsels, and condemn their acts ?

It is among the imperfections incident to humanity, that those who conceive wisely,



cannot, in the nature of things, always execute their own designs. Extended machinery requires extended instrumentality: and neglect may nullify, favoritism abuse, or corruption pervert, the designs of the best hearts and the wisest heads. This we shall have occasion to see, as we proceed. We may here notice, as a remarkable proof of the "evil eye" with which our author continually regards the "Church of England," that he goes the extravagant length, of blaming its authorities for not giving to the poor, what he contends was granted to them, at the Reformation, for this specific purpose. He tells us: "At the period of the Reformation, when Henry VIII assumed the headship of the Church of England, all these immense estates were confiscated and conferred upon the bishops and other clergy and leaders of the great reform. \* \* All that was given to the English bishops and clergy has remained the property of the establishment to this day. \* \* Not the



slightest regard has been paid by these bishops and clergy, any more than the lay grantees, to the trusts under which these estates were granted." (p. 140, 141.)

Now let us quote the statute of July 29th 1539: "A statute was made confirming the seizure and surrender of the abbeys; and in which it is provided that 'all monasteries or other religious houses, dissolved, suppressed, surrendered, or by any means come to his highness, shall be vested in him, his heirs, and successors for ever.' But the vast possessions so vested in the Crown, were soon lost by wasteful grants and alienations, and no substantial national advantage was derived from that great revolution by which in five years, a fifth or a fourth part of the landed property of England and Wales has been confiscated." (*Wade's British History*.) "Parliament passed an act for establishing new bishoprics, deaneries, and colleges, which were to be endowed with revenues raised on the



lands of the monasteries; but it was too late; the money and lands were gone, or the king and his ministers needed all that remained. The number of new bishoprics was reduced from eighteen to six \* \*". "At the same time 14 abbeys and priories were converted into cathedrals and collegiate churches, with deans and prebendaries; but the king kept to himself a part of the lands which had been attached to them, and charged the chapters with the obligation of contributing annually to the support of the poor, and the repair of the highways." (*Knight's England.*)

These extracts will cast some light upon the ecclesiastical history of the times. Without entering into any argument upon the premises of our author, does not his charge disprove itself? But, supposing that the bishops and clergy, of subsequent tenure, *were* morally bound to make such appropriation to the poor, as he insists they were, by what authority does he declare that, "not



the slightest regard" has been paid by them to such presumed obligations? For all that he *can* know to the contrary, the authorities of the English Church have, regularly and faithfully, fulfilled these obligations, assuming their existence. Have not the English Clergy, in all subsequent times, given large sums for the support of the poor? Undoubtedly they have: and for all that our critic knows to the contrary, they have thus disposed of these very funds. But it is at once plain, even to the superficial reader, that the whole assumption is gratuitous, on his part. As we have said before, the charge refutes itself. Whatever possessions were granted to the Church by Henry 8th, were taken from her by Mary, and came under new jurisdiction upon the accession of Elizabeth. Even were such a claim upon the clergy in existence *then*, it was certainly nullified by the Act just recited, "43 Elizabeth, Cap. 2," by which the poor were taken under public guardianship. Had such a



claim legally existed, even if buried in abeyance, is it probable that it would have escaped enforcement by all subsequent generations, to be exhumed by Thomas Ruggles, in 1793, and revived by the sagacious writer of "New Themes," in 1851? If our author possess so happy a knack of re-animating such dormant claims, he can soon have his hands full, as an attorney, to his incalculable emolument. He blames the public authorities of England for the establishment of the Poor House System. He says (p. 144) : "They have invented the poor house, that stigma of Protestantism." Let us examine this matter for a moment. The pauper who can work, should be made to work. We offer higher authority for this position than our own. St. Paul tells us, If any man will not work neither shall he eat. 2 Thess. 3—10.

It stands to reason that, the industrious should not support the idle ; and the idle are injured by such unnecessary support.



But if each pauper be allowed to remain in his own house, how can he be compelled to labour? He may, and will, feign sickness; and find many excuses to avoid work. Each pauper would require an overseer, which would be an intolerable expense.

Collected together in a "Poor House," supervision and administration become comparatively easy and inexpensive. So with regard to bed ridden, or feeble, poor; it is unjust to expect the community to support them, divided into families. But, congregated together in "poor houses," they can receive medical attendance, provisions, and other comforts, at a great saving of laborious management and burdensome expenditure.

Much will remain to be done, and much should be done, by private charity, to provide for many poor, at their own homes, even under the most comprehensive "poor house system." But it plainly appears that, if the bulk of the poor are to be provided



for at all, they are to be provided for in "poor houses:"—in those domiciles of discriminating charity, which our critic dilapidates at a blow, as the "stigma of Protestantism." It is a rather remarkable fact, that a feature of the Christian world, which has been so often lauded in contradistinction to Pagan neglect of the helpless, should be selected by our author as a "stigma of Protestantism;" he might as well have said, of Christianity; for the "Religious Houses" which preceded Protestantism, were, in fact, very generally, "poor houses."

We think we can satisfactorily prove that, it was owing to the neglect of faithfully carrying out the "poor house system," that many of the evils of English pauperism are to be attributed. We shall show, also, that so far from "English Christians" having been guilty of neglecting and oppressing the poor, exactly the contrary is the fact. England has "neglected" and "oppressed"—not the poor—but the interests of the industri-



ous and moral of her citizens; who have been compelled, from mistaken lenity, and mal-administration, to support thousands of the idle and vicious, who were well able to support themselves.

Let us now see what was the operation of placing the poor under the charge of the "*public authorities*;" the agency for which our author expresses so strong a disgust. State of the Country before the enactment of Poor Law, Act 43 Eliz. :

"The country was overrun by thieves and vagabonds. There were at least three or four hundred vagabonds in each county, who lived by theft and rapine. Their numbers intimidated the magistrates, and there were instances of justices of the peace, who after sentencing these depredators, interfered to stop the execution of their sentences, from a dread of the vengeance of their confederates." *Wade's British History*.

State of the Country after the enactment of the Poor Law Act :



"The institution of Poor Laws, by compelling the idle to labour, and taking away all pretexts for vagrancy, helped greatly to mitigate these disorders, and laid the foundation of that municipal order, and industrial prosperity, which subsequently distinguished England among the nations of Europe." *Wade's Brit. Hist.*

So the agency of "public authorities," seems here to have worked admirably. We have noticed our critic's complaints that, the English poor have been neglected and oppressed. What has been the opinion of those who were certainly qualified to be good judges in the premises?

"In 1697, the celebrated John Locke, in the capacity of one of the Commissioners of the Board of Trade, drew up a report on the state of the poor in which he expressed an opinion that one half of those who received Parish aid are able to get their livelihood. He recommended a stricter enforcing of the vagrant laws, and the estab-



lishment of working schools for the employment of those who are able, but unwilling to labour." This does not look much like "neglecting" the interest of the poor!

In 1704, the celebrated Daniel Defoe published an address to parliament, entitled "Giving Alms No Charity," in which he states that there is in England, "more labour than hands to perform it; and of course a want of people, not of employment. No man of sound limbs and senses can be poor, merely from want of work." He considers the improvidence of the poor a principal cause of their wretchedness. "We are," says he, "the most *lazy, diligent* people in the world: there is nothing more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pocket full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drink till it is all gone."

Perhaps our author is more fortunate in his condemnation of the Poor House system? Let us see how that system was found to answer its design: "Immediately



after the introduction of the WORKHOUSE SYSTEM, such was the aversion of the poor to the confinement and *employment* it subjected them to, that the number of claimants for parish aid was, in most places, reduced one half." *Wade's British History*.

This does not look like failure ! We shall now subjoin an authority, which demolishes both of our author's charges at one blow : which proves that the poor were *too lavishly* supplied, and that the *relaxation* of the Workhouse system, opened the door to extensive evils.

"The serious abuses (Geo. 3, 1795) of mixing up *wages* with the parish allowance, and of a profuse grant of relief *out of the work-house* became prevalent. They originated in high prices. The price of Corn, which for three years preceding 1795 had averaged 54 shillings, rose to 74 shillings a quarter. As wages continued stationary, the distress of the poor was very great, and many able bodied labourers, who had rare-



ly before applied for parish assistance, became claimants for relief. Instead of meeting this emergency by temporary expedients, and by grants of relief proportioned to the urgency of each individual case, one uniform system was adopted. The magistrates of Berks and some of the southern counties issued tables, showing the wages which they thought every labouring man *ought* to receive, according to variations in the price of bread, and the number of his family; and they accompanied these tables with an order, directing the Parish officers to make up the difference to the labourer, in the event of the wages paid to him by his employer falling short of the tabular allowance. An act was also passed to allow the justices to administer *relief out of the work-houses*, and to grant it to such poor persons as had property of their own." *Wade's British History*.

This does not look like starving the poor !  
So far back as twenty years before this, in



1774, "At a general meeting of the parishioners of Eccles near Manchester, it was unanimously agreed to strike off from the poor's rate all paupers who shall after the 20th inst. *keep dogs!*" In 1800 it appeared, "that upon a population in England and Wales of 8,870,000 no less than 234,000 were partakers of parochial relief; that is nearly  $\frac{1}{7}$ th part of the people were indebted to the other  $\frac{6}{7}$ ths wholly or in part." No marvel, when it was so easy a thing to remain idle, and be fed by an industrious neighbour. Our critic complains that, "masses of labourers are kept in hopeless poverty and dependence; they are allowed the scantiest subsistence which will support life, that high taxes and high rents may be paid" (p. 167.) And do the poorer classes receive no advantage from the distribution of these high taxes? We find by a report Wm. 4, 1830-37. "Nearly three fourths of the entire sum yearly levied as poor rates, are paid by the occupiers and owners of the



soil." We are told: (p. 145) "The allowance of the poor has gone far below that of the soldier or sailor, or even the thief and murderer in prison." This is hardly a fair statement of the case. We can readily believe that the pauper receives a less allowance than "the thief and the murderer." Such men are generally well fed in prison; and "soldiers and sailors," of course, must be fed more on meat, than vegetables: but the true question is, not how does the pauper fare, as compared with others who are fed by Government, but how stands the comparison with those who feed themselves? The inquiries of Commissioners appointed to inquire into the operation of the Poor Laws, in 1832, ascertained that, of *solid food*, weekly, the independent "agricultural labourer, receives 122 ounces; the able bodied pauper 151"! So, in 1834, "Among the facts noted by the Commissioners, was the superior condition of the pauper, to an independent labourer."



Surely our author is singularly unhappy in his choice of "Themes." We now resume our chronological review of the English Poor Laws, and, we think, have so far proved, that neither of our critic's general positions—viz. that the poor were neglected and oppressed, and that the Poor House system is a "stigma upon protestantism," is correct. Exactly the contrary we have shown the facts to be. Will farther examination bear us out? We shall see.

We proceed to the year 1815 referring to Act 55, Geo. 3 c. 137.

"The legislation upon the subject of the poor during the present period was certainly not calculated to check the increase of pauperism. In 1815 the Act called East's Act was passed which relaxed the ancient regulations so far as to empower justices to order relief for any length of time they chose, not exceeding three months, and to enact that the *pauper should no longer be*



*required to come into any work-house, but should receive his or her allowance in money at his or her home or house."* *Knight's England.*

We pass on to 1819, Act 59, Geo. 3rd. c. 12: "A more familiarly known measure, Sturges Bourne's Act, passed in 1819, while it provided for the establishment of select vestries and the appointment of assistant overseers, *facilitated the erection of work-houses*, and also recognized, though with little practical effect, the old, and as far as it can be carried out, sound principle of setting the paupers to work."

Relax the work house system, and it seems the injurious effects were soon visible. The next feature of this Act, does not look much like "grinding the faces of the poor."

"It surely evinced a strange misconception, a forgetfulness of the purpose and essential character of a compulsory provision for the poor, when it required the church wardens and overseers to pay to such pau-



pers as they might employ, reasonable wages for their labour, and give to the said pauper labourers such and the like remedies for the recovery of their wages as other labourers in husbandry have." *Knight's England*.

The number of voluntary paupers in Great Britain, at any one time, it would, of course, be difficult to ascertain. It is a very striking thought, and deserves the attention of our zealous author, that "The rate of wages is not determined exclusively by the number of the people, but partly also by the habits or notions which prevail in the county as to the mode of living proper for the working man ; who, rather than labour for wages which will not maintain him at that established or customary point of comfort and decency, may choose to refuse to continue a labourer, and transfer himself to the class of paupers." *Knight's England*.

As our author seems so anxious to know what English Christians have done for their poor, let us ask his attention to the follow-



ing figures. They have done a large part of this :—

The Poor Rates were in 1820 £7,329,594

“ “ 1830 8,111,422

“ “ 1835 6,356,345

“ “ 1840 5,468,699

“ “ 1845 5,543,650

Now \$27,000,000, to \$40,000,000, per annum is quite a respectable sum ; but their proportion of this, is only what they do through the “ public authorities.” To this add, the untold millions given away through local “ societies,” and by private charity, and we shall have an enormous amount of money, as an evidence of what these unfeeling “ English Christians have done.” What they are especially doing now, we have seen on a preceding page ; where it appeared that, whilst the paupers were indulging themselves in millions of dollars worth of rum and tobacco, the Christians, in the meantime, were helping to market and keep house for them.



We proceed to prove that, the capital mistake of England, has been the lavish expenditure of money for the poor. The nation began to realize, that this profuse liberality, was a robbery of the industrious, and a demoralizer of the poor. The evil had risen to such a pitch that, in 1832, the Crown appointed a Commission of Inquiry, consisting of nine persons under whose direction, the condition of every parish in England and Wales was investigated and reported. "The chief reasons upon which the new legislation was founded were the burdensome amount of the poor rates—the temptation to improvident habits they held out—the *superior condition of the pauper to an independent labourer*, \* \* the payment of wages out of the rates—the granting of *out door* allowances to *able bodied labourers*—encouragement afforded to incontinence, by the allowance granted to mothers for the maintenance of illegitimate children &c." *Wade's British History*.



Here is one strong authority on our side: and now we shall present the evidence of one who, we imagine, will have great weight with our author. No one will suspect Harriet Martineau as a bigoted Christian witness. We quote from "The History of England During the Peace." Speaking of the inquiries of the Commissioners of the Crown she tells us:

"Among a multitude of painful facts, the most mournful was the pervading and unceasing oppression of virtue and encouragement of vice. The poor-rate had become public spoil. The ignorant believed it an inexhaustible fund which belonged to them. To obtain their share, the brutal bullied the administrator, the profligate exhibited their bastards which must be fed, the idle folded their arms, and waited till they got it; ignorant boys and girls married upon it; poachers, thieves, and prostitutes extorted it by intimidation; country justices



lavished it for popularity; and guardians for convenience. This was the way the fund went. As for whence it arose—it came, more and more every year, out of the capital of the shopkeeper and the farmer, and the diminishing resources of the country gentleman. The shopkeeper's stock and returns dwindled, as the farmer's land deteriorated, and the gentleman's expenditure contracted. The farmer's sons, waiting, at the age of five-and-thirty, for ability to marry in comfort, saw in every ditch and field on the estates lads under twenty, whose children were maintained by the rates which were ruining their employer. Instead of the proper number of labourers to till his lands—labourers paid by himself—the farmer was compelled to take double the number, whose wages were paid partly out of the rates: and these men, being employed by compulsion on him, were beyond his control—worked or not as they chose—let down the quality of his land, and dis-



abled him from employing the better men who would have toiled hard for independence. These better men sank down among the worse: the rate-paying cottager, after a vain struggle, went to the pay-table to seek relief: the modest girl might starve, while her bolder neighbour received 1s. 6d. per week for every illegitimate child.

"Industry, probity, purity, prudence—all heart and spirit—the whole soul of goodness—were melting down into depravity and social ruin, like snow under the foul internal fires which precede the earthquake." (Vol. 2 p. 82, 83.) "There were clergymen in the commission, as well as politicians and economists, and they took these things to heart, and laboured diligently to frame suggestions for a measure which should heal and recreate the moral spirit, as well as the economical condition of society in England."

Now with these *facts* before him, what does the reader think of a writer who can



assert, "The Church of England turned the poor out of doors, and took possession of their houses and goods; and whilst revelling in the enjoyment of these ill-gotten gains, myriads of paupers, lying at her gates, are suffering the extremities of sickness, nakedness, and want" (p. 147)? How much does the above picture look like "sickness, nakedness, and want?" Miss Martineau proceeds: "While the magistrates were giving to pauper applicants *at their own houses* an additional loaf for every child, that loaf was provided by the more high minded labourer, who toiled to raise the rate demanded of him, while he and his children were hungry together." (Vol. 2. p. 84.)

Speaking of the principles which directed the inquiries of the Commissioners, she says: "In observance of the great principle that the independent labourer was not to be sacrificed to the pauper, all administration of relief to the able-bodied *at their*



*own houses* was to be discontinued as soon as possible; and the allowance system was put an end to entirely. The shameless petitioner was no longer to *carry home* so many shillings or loaves for so many children, while his more honorable neighbour not only went without, but bore part of the cost." And what was one of the most important measures, which forced its claims upon the attention of the Commissioners? Alas for our author's theory! it was the rigid enforcement of that "stigma of protestantism," the poor house system. For our historian proceeds: "Henceforth the indigent must come into the work house for relief, if he must have it. There stood the great house—with shelter, clothing and food, for the destitute who choose to claim it: but, in justice to the independent poor, and to society at large, there were conditions belonging to this relief which ought never to have been objected to by reasonable persons, however irksome they might and must be to the idle,



dissolute, and extremely ignorant, who form a large proportion of the pauper class. One condition was, that the able-bodied should work;—should do a certain amount of work for every meal. They might go out after the expiration of twenty-four hours; but while in the house they must work." (Vol. 2 p. 84, 85.)

This "stigma of protestantism," does not seem so very formidable an evil after all! On the 14th of August, 1834, the POOR LAW AMENDMENT ACT received the royal assent, and the historian graphically depicts its results :

"The facts which all men might know, if they would are, that before two years were out, wages were rising and rates were falling in the whole series of county parishes : farmers were employing more labourers ; surplus labour was absorbed ; bullying paupers were transformed into steady working men ; the decrease of illegitimate births, chargeable to the parish throughout



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England, was nearly 10,000 or nearly 13 per cent; clergymen testified that they were relieved from much of the pain and shame of having to celebrate marriages when the bride was on the point of becoming a mother, or where the parties were mere children, with no other prospect than the parish pay-table; and, finally, the rates which had risen nearly a million in their annual amount during the five years before the Poor Law Commission was issued, sank down, in the course of the five years after it, from being upwards of seven millions to very little above four." (Vol. 2. p. 89.)

To the same effect is the testimony which we find in Wade's British History, showing the results of three years experience: "The enormous reduction in parochial expenditure has been chiefly effected by the refusal of *out door* relief to the poor, &c."

Having thus fully demonstrated the truth of our various positions; viz: 1st, The necessity of the agency of "public authori-



ties ;" 2ndly, The lavish expenditure of money in relief of the poor ; and, 3rdly, the expediency and usefulness of the Poor House System ; we shall close the subject with the convincing and unexceptionable testimony of the authoress of the "History of England, During the Thirty Years' Peace."

"There can be no question of our methods of charity having improved since the publication of the reports on which the reform of the Poor Law was founded. *There was always plenty of alms-giving ;—prone-ness enough to relieve the misery which met the eye.* Now, there is more searching into the causes of misery, and a more widely spread knowledge that *social misery cannot be cured, but is usually aggravated by alms-giving.*" (Vol. 2. p. 714.)

We notice, on page 29, an implied assertion of a truly startling character :—no, not "startling :"—we have become so accustomed to our author's Anathemas and Bulls



(we leave the geographical location of this word, whether Rome or Ireland, unexplained;) that we really find ourselves getting hardened. There is nothing like a sound rating, for an *indurating* agent. *Endure rating* we have to; and we might as well make ourselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. But "Protestant religious literature" has fallen under a sad reproach, when our author inquires, where, in all its range, shall we find a treatise upon the "Love of God, which does justice to the magnitude of the subject?"

If our critic confine himself to strictness of terms, the answer is obvious:—there is no such treatise in protestant literature, or in any other literature. To properly celebrate the love of that august, yet gracious, Being, not only human ability, but the might of the angel, and the zeal of the seraph, are, alike, feeble and inefficient. In the overwhelming contemplation of that love which hath redeemed us by no less a



price than the effusion of the blood of His only begotten Son, the loftiest genius feels that its strength has departed, and the lips of the eloquent become dumb.

But this our author knows, as well as we do ; and it is not in this sense the question is put. The query is equivalent to an assertion that, there is no treatise upon the subject, which deserves consideration and respect. It may be so : but among the hundreds that might be enumerated, let us beg his attention to the few cited below :

*Byfield.* Essay concerning the assurance of God's love and man's salvation. 1614.

*Twisse.* Riches of God's love. 1653.

*Rigge.* The banner of God's love, and ensign of righteousness. 1657.

*Vane.* Of the love of God, and union with God. 1657.

*Boyle.* Seraphic love, or some motives and incentives to the love of God. 1660.

*Bellamy.* Upon the nature of love to God, &c.



*Quarles.* God's love—man's unworthiness. 1684.

*Masham.* A discourse concerning the love of God. 1696.

*Scott.* Concerning the love of God. 1700.

*Sheraton.* A discourse on the character of God as love. 1805.

*Trapp.* God's love-tokens. 1637.

*Gale.* A sermon entitled, "Wherein the love of the world is inconsistent with love to God." 1774.

The love of God to mankind. 1720.

*Johnson.* The love of God. 1758.

*Jenkins.* The love of the brethren, proceeding from the perception of the love of God. 1795.

*Norris.* Letters concerning the love of God. 1695.

*Tutty.* Divine love exemplified. 1741.

*Hussey.* Of our love to God. 1758.

*Kingsford.* Universality of divine love to man.

The wonderful love of God to man. 1788.



Has our critic "read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested," all these, and some hundreds more, to which theological libraries invite his perusal? If he have not, he is hardly competent to judge of the matter. If he have "weighed them all in the balances, and found them wanting," he must remember that, in spite of his "Index Expurgatorius," others will still continue to read, to approve, and to profit.

To revert for a moment to our author's insulting comparison of Christians' want of humanity, as compared with the zeal of his favourite infidel and socialist reformers:—we scruple not to say that, every social reform, and philanthropic enterprise, "worthy of the name" has been the work of Christians.

What have the "long list of men," including Paine, (whom he cites as an example) whose "zeal for humanity," he tells us, "made them infidels, or whose infidelity begot their zeal for human welfare"—what



have they ever done for the benefit of the human race? In England, what have Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, Tindal, Collins, Gibbon, or Hume, ever done? In France, what have Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, or D'Alembert, ever done? What has the modern school of French socialists, ever done? In America, what have Paine, Owen, (thank God the list is small, as yet!) and their wretched followers, ever done?

But,—to look for a moment at the other side of the picture,—Were Wilberforce, Sharp, Thornton, and Macaulay, infidels? Were Howard, Fry, Gurney, and the Tukes, socialists? Have not all real reformers, from Father Chrysostom, to Father Mathew, from Martin Luther, to Henry Martyn, been Christians? Did “zeal for humanity” make these men infidels? And in our generation, who are the men and the women who “willingly offer themselves,” their health, strength, and substance, upon the altar of humanity, but Christians?



Who "visit the widow, and the fatherless, in their affliction;"—who penetrate the lanes and alleys of our cities, to relieve the destitute, and offer consolation to the sick and dying:—who gather neglected children into ragged schools, and Sunday Schools,—but Christians?

We envy not the position of their traducer. It is no desirable title,—“The accuser of the brethren!” The “Theme” is no new one, nor is the title. Both are as old as the days of Job; when, at the imposing convocation of the “sons of God,” there appeared an intruder in their midst, who had been “going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down” among the children of men, to spy out their infirmities, and exaggerate their defects!

We now proceed to briefly notice the mysterious personage who figures as the editor of this very remarkable production. He “comes in such a questionable shape, that we must speak to him.” He favours



us with twenty one lines of preface, and one hundred pages of notes and comments. He enumerates a vast number of works upon political economy, and local statistics. We want some more satisfactory evidence of the utility of these volumes, than their effect upon the mind and temper of the author of "New Themes." From the editor's evident affinity with French Socialists, and English Radicals, we fear that he has been getting into bad company without knowing it. We are glad that he "totally dissents [p. 363] from the plans of reforming political institutions which the socialists have proposed;" and we hope that this "dissent" will operate to induce him to part companionship from such unsafe guides: for he may be sure that, if he continue the connection, "evil is before him." But we have to take the editor to task for the ill service he does his friend, the author, in his preface. He desires us not to "cast aside this little volume, as the work of a crude and unfurnished



mind, or as the product of a captious grumbler, ignorant of the theology he underrates and incapable of grasping his subject; or as the sickly dreams of a diseased imagination." Is it not curious, that the one whom we may suppose to have been the author's first reader, should have thought it necessary to give us this caution? What should we think of the friendship to the vender, of the stander by, who should desire us, when we were making a purchase, not to suspect that the goods were counterfeit, and unequal to their pretensions? We should certainly subject them to a most rigid inspection. We warn the author to regard the editor with a suspicious eye. For a less offence than this, Gil Blas lost his situation; and we should think the writer of the preface, as little worthy of being editor to the author of "New Themes," as was Gil Blas to be reader to the "Archbishop of Granada." The author may well exclaim, "save me from my friends!" But



is he the author's friend? May not a secret foe have stimulated this effusion? Men, in all ages, have ardently desired that their "enemies should *write* books;" but malice has seldom gone so far as to insist upon their immediate *publication*!

But we cannot excuse our author thus: he knows what he is doing; and that he "thinks for himself," is proved by his thinking so differently from almost every one else. We understand that "New Themes" has had an extensive sale; and this we regard as the author's sorest punishment: for next to the misfortune of having written such a book, should be the mortification of seeing it in print; and an extensive circulation, is a calamity indeed! That it should sell well, is to be expected. Men have a natural taste for belligerent demonstrations; and twenty will stop to see a combat, where one will pause to see two friends shake hands.

Yet we do not at all think that this work will be without its uses, though not exactly



those which the author intended. Teachers of rhetoric can quote its sentences as an exemplification of the difference between declamation and argument ; and logicians can point to its pages as a standing instance of the danger of reasoning in a circle, and as a proof of the utility of the science of induction. Literary aspirants will pause, before they hastily commit themselves to the press ; and political economists will discourage crude speculations, which tend to bring their name into disrepute. Self constituted judges will be more willing to sit at the footstool of experience : and social reformers will not so readily mistake the impulses of zeal, for the deductions of knowledge. They will see here a melancholy proof, that even well meaning advocacy may wound the cause which it seeks to serve ; and they will, therefore, deem it wiser to content themselves with the unobtrusive discharge of their own round of duty, and leave the seat of "Gamaliel" to



those, to whom, with the inclination, Providence has also granted the ability.

We regret that the highly respectable individual to whom report ascribes this volume, has not better employed his leisure hours; and we hope that if he should hereafter give us a continuation of "New Themes," it may be recommended by a more kindly spirit, and be better calculated to advance what he seems to have so much at heart;—the well being of the indigent, and the moral and social improvement of the human race.

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